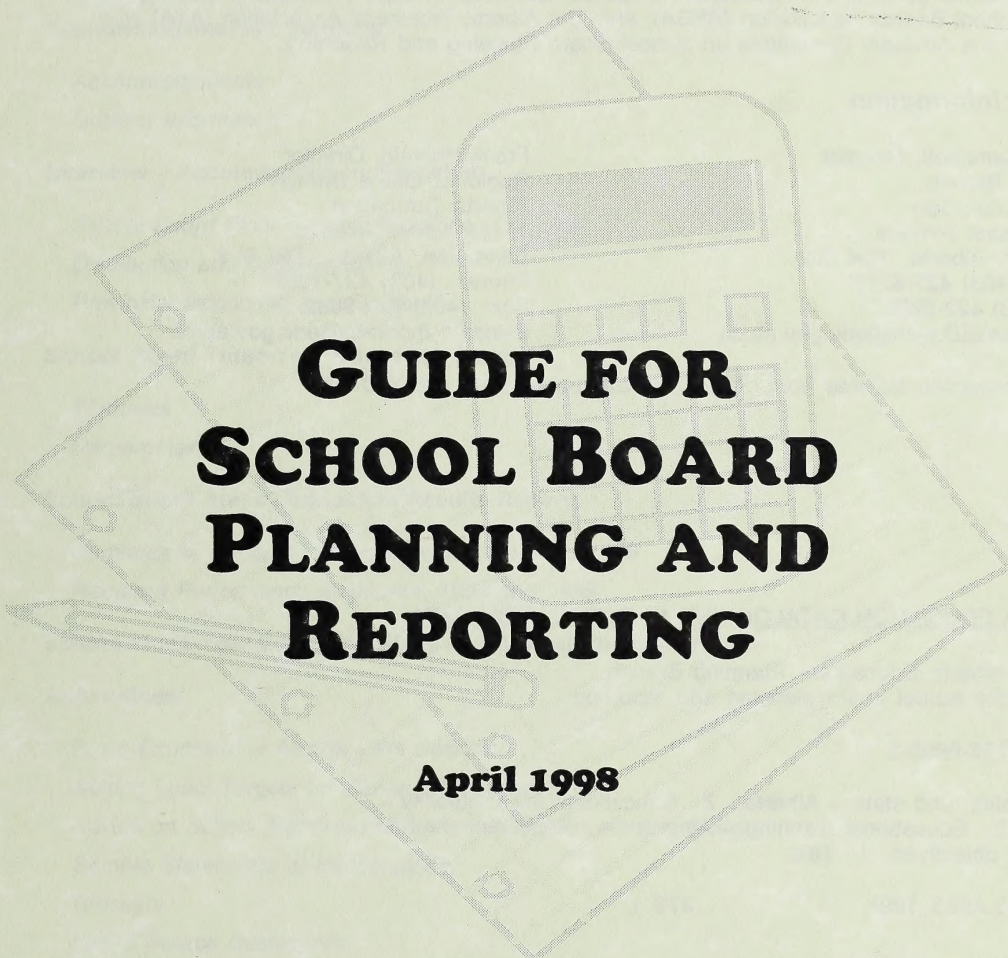


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# **GUIDE FOR SCHOOL BOARD PLANNING AND REPORTING**

**April 1998**

**Alberta**  
EDUCATION



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / CONTACTS**

### ***Acknowledgments***

This guide was developed with input from representatives from the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS), the Association of School Business Officials of Alberta (ASBOA), the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA), and The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) who served on the Advisory Committee on School Board Planning and Reporting.

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### **ALBERTA EDUCATION CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION DATA**

Alberta. Alberta Education. Planning Branch.  
Guide for school board planning and reporting.

ISBN 0-7732-9909-2

1. Education and state – Alberta. 2. Educational accountability – Alberta. 3. Educational planning – Alberta. 4. Education – Alberta – Aims and objectives. I. Title.

LC91.2.A3.A333 1998

379.1

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## OVERVIEW – ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION

**Authority:** The legislation which authorizes the Minister to require school board plans and reports is the *School Act* (Statutes of Alberta, 1988, Chapter S-3.1 as amended, S. 60.2 [1-3]) and the *Government Accountability Act*, Statutes of Alberta 1995 Chapter G-5.5, S.16).

Other relevant provincial government policies are contained in the *Accountability in Education: Policy Framework* (June, 1995) and the *Policy, Regulation and Forms Manual* (April, 1997).

School board education plans and results reports:

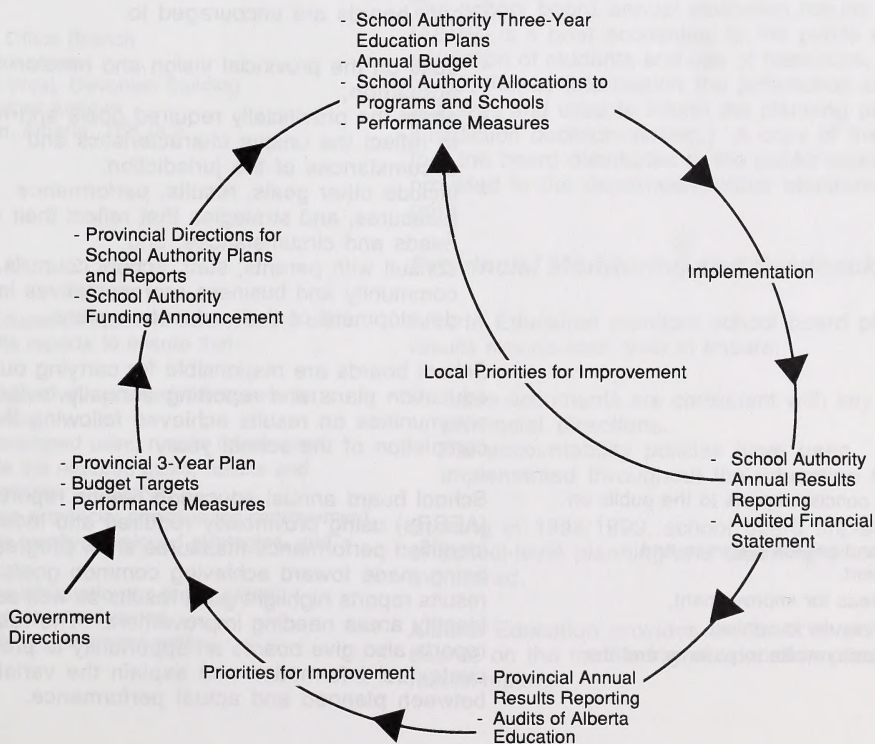
- are public documents approved by the board,
- specify student learning priorities,
- guide decision making and budgeting,
- meet provincial requirements and local needs, and
- improve the education system.

School board education plans and results reports are accountability documents for a results-focused education system. The plans identify the results boards plan to achieve for each goal, the actions that boards will carry out, and the measures that boards will use to assess and report on progress and achievement in their results reports.

This guide outlines the provincial requirements for school board three-year education plans and annual education results reports. School board planning and reporting take place in the context of government's three-year plan for education and other provincial directions for Alberta's education system.

From the provincial plan for education, Alberta Education has identified a core set of goals, results, performance measures, and priorities for improvement that school boards use in updating their three-year education plans and report on in their annual results report. This enables boards to address local needs and priorities while ensuring their plans are consistent with provincial directions.

## Accountability Cycle for Alberta's Education System



### ***School Board Planning and Reporting***

School board three-year education plans and reports on results achieved are key to improving education, ensuring resources are put to good use, enhancing communication and accountability, and strengthening the linkage with government directions for education.

School Board plans must:

- maintain a three-year time frame,
- include required provincial goals, results and performance measures,
- address provincial and local priorities for improvement,
- indicate how their budget supports the goals and priorities in their plan.

When updating their plans each year, school boards should consider:

- the information in their results report and in the provincial three-year plan and annual results report,
- the feedback they receive from Alberta Education, school councils, parents and the public, and
- how to allocate resources to achieve results outlined in the plan.

The school board education plan maintains a three-year time frame that is reviewed and adjusted annually, based on recent experience. As one year is completed another is added, rolling the plan forward. It should be unnecessary to rework the plan each year except in unusual circumstances.

School boards are encouraged to:

- build on the provincial vision and mission for education;
- adapt the provincially required goals and results to reflect the unique characteristics and circumstances of the jurisdiction;
- include other goals, results, performance measures, and strategies that reflect their local needs and circumstances; and
- consult with parents, staff, school councils, and community and business representatives in the development of their education plans.

School boards are responsible for carrying out their education plans and reporting annually to their communities on results achieved following the completion of the school year.

AERRs are concise reports to the public on results that:

- highlight and assess progress and achievement,
- identify areas for improvement,
- place the results in context,
- communicate results to parents and the public.

School board annual education results reports (AERRs) using provincially required and locally identified performance measures show progress is being made toward achieving common goals. These results reports highlight good results as well as identify areas needing improvement. The results reports also give boards an opportunity to provide contextual information and explain the variation between planned and actual performance.



Preparing education plans and results reports provide boards opportunities to work with administrative and school staff, school councils, community members, professional groups and other stakeholders. Such involvement creates commitment to and understanding of the goals and priorities of the jurisdiction.

### ***Distribution and Communication***

#### **Three-Year Plan for 1998/1999 to 2000/2001 to be completed by June 15, 1998.**

Place on jurisdiction website and notify Alberta Education by e-mail to: askED.plan@edc.gov.ab.ca or by letter to: Director  
Regional Office Branch  
Alberta Education  
3rd Floor West, Devonian Building  
11160 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0L2

#### **Annual education results report to be distributed to the public by November 30 each year and a copy provided to the department.**

Place on jurisdiction website and notify Alberta Education by e-mail to: askED.plan@edc.gov.ab.ca or send two (2) copies to: Director  
Regional Office Branch  
Alberta Education  
3rd Floor West, Devonian Building  
11160 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0L2

School board three-year education plans and annual education results reports are public documents approved by the school board. The complete plan is to be on file and available for department inspection and public review in the jurisdiction office and in schools. The key people responsible for implementing the plan – board staff, school staff and school councils – will need copies.

School boards may wish to prepare detailed implementation plans for use within the jurisdiction and to publish highlights of the plan for general distribution to parents and the public. School board technology plans and school-level plans complement the school board plan. These are also to be available for department inspection and public review in the jurisdiction office and schools.

The school board annual education results report (AERR) is a brief accounting to the public about the education of students and use of resources. (This is in addition to information the jurisdiction collects, analyzes and uses to inform the planning process and jurisdiction decision-making.) A copy of the AERR that the board distributes to the public must be provided to the department either electronically or in print.

### ***Provincial Monitoring and Feedback***

Alberta Education monitors school board plans and results reports to ensure that

- plans:
  - are aligned with provincial directions for education,
  - are developed using results information,
  - include the required goals, results and performance measures,
  - address provincial priorities for improvement,
  - include locally-developed strategies, and
- reports:
  - include information on the required performance measures,
  - identify improvement areas.

Alberta Education monitors school board plans and results reports each year to ensure:

- these documents are consistent with key provincial directions.
- the accountability policies have been implemented throughout the education system.

Starting in 1998/1999, school board implementation of school-level planning and reporting also will be monitored.

Alberta Education provides feedback to school boards on the monitoring of education plans and results reports.

Provincial monitoring also enables information from board plans and reports to be considered in updating the provincial three-year plan and results report, and developing province-wide initiatives and policies for education.

Alberta Education does not review school board plans and reports for writing style, format, or level of school involvement in school board planning and reporting.



### SCHOOL BOARD THREE-YEAR EDUCATION PLANS

#### Required Elements of School Board Three-Year Education Plans

- Statement of Board Responsibility
- Vision
- Mission
- Principles and/or Beliefs
- Profile/Issues and Trends (new)
- Priority Areas for Improvement
- Goals
- Results
- Performance Measures
- Targets
- Strategies
- Budget Information
- Capital Projects

#### Plans are to be completed by June 15, 1998

Statement of responsibility is:

- a commitment to work toward achieving what's outlined in the plan.
- signed by board chair and superintendent.

A vision statement looks to the future and describes an ideal to be achieved.

#### New vision statement for Alberta's education system:

Alberta's young people are the best educated in the country, able to achieve their individual potential, create a positive future for themselves, their families and their communities, and contribute to Alberta's prosperity and superior quality of life.

Mission - a clear, concise statement of an organization's overall purpose and role.

**New mission for education in Alberta:** To ensure that all Alberta students have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

#### *Elements*

The elements of the school board three-year education plan are inter-related. The school board uses information about what and where a school board is (mission, beliefs, profile, issues and trends, current performance levels) to help determine where the school board would like to be (vision, goals, results), how achievement of results will be assessed (performance measures and targets), and what actions will be taken (strategies) and how resources will be allocated (budget) to achieve the desired goals. The following elements are to be included in the school board three-year education plan.

#### *Statement of School Board Responsibility*

- confirms that the school board plan was developed in accordance with legislative authority and government requirements.
- indicates the commitment of the school board to achieve the goals and results contained within the plan.
- is signed by the board chair and superintendent.
- see Appendix 4, page 25, for sample statement of responsibility for school board plans.

#### *Vision*

- a description of the fundamental characteristics of education that the school board is committed to achieving.
- describes where the school board wants to be, what its students will have achieved, and what its services and programs for students will look like over the longer term.
- is consistent with the provincial vision for education.
- also called a preferred future.

#### *Mission*

- an organization's reason for existing.
- gives focus to all the programs and services a school board provides for students.
- is consistent with the provincial mission for the education system.



### *Principles and/or Beliefs*

Principles and/or beliefs reflect the values of the school board and what it stands for.

- serve to guide all decision making and assist in the development of the mission, vision, and goals.
- access to quality education, equity, flexibility, responsiveness and accountability are the principles for the provincial education system; these are listed and described in the provincial three-year plan for education.

### *Profile/Issues and Trends (new required element)*

The profile is a brief description of the jurisdiction.

An issue is an existing or emerging condition or situation which, if left unaddressed, could interfere with the ability to fulfill a mandate or achieve goals.

Trends are directions of data established over time that

- show increases, decreases, or no change (e.g., enrolments over time, student achievement over time).
- need to be taken into account in planning and budgeting.

- overviews the characteristics of the school jurisdiction, the students and the community it serves (e.g., students, programs, schools);
- identifies issues, trends, opportunities, and challenges facing the school jurisdiction that need to be taken into account when developing goals, strategies, results and measures for the plan.
- three years' worth of data is the minimum needed to establish a trend. Five years' worth of trend data is a manageable amount to report and use.

### *Priority Areas for Improvement and Funded Initiatives*

#### **Required Provincial Priority Areas for Improvement:**

- improving co-ordination of services for children,
- increasing high school completion rates,
- improving secondary student achievement in mathematics,
- improving access to information technology,
- improving public satisfaction with education (new).

Boards are to indicate strategies for:

- students whose first language is other than English,
- students with special needs (mild, moderate, severe, gifted) as defined by Alberta Education,
- Native students,
- disadvantaged students, and
- other students at risk of falling behind.

Provincial and local priority areas for improvement are identified from performance measures information.

School board plans must include strategies:

- to address improvement areas which have been identified from their annual education results reports; and
- to address provincial priority areas for improvement for the education system as identified in *First things first ... our children: the Government of Alberta's 3 Year Plan for Education, 1998/1999 to 2000/2001*.
- to enable targeted groups of students to achieve provincial learning expectations.

Provincial investment funding is provided over the next three years to help school boards address the provincial priority areas for improvement and meet the needs of targeted groups of students.

- New initiatives:
  - Early Literacy Initiative
  - Teacher Assistants
  - English as a second language for Canadian-born students



- Continuing initiatives:
  - Special Education
  - Native education funding
  - English as a Second Language for immigrant students
  - Program Enhancement Project (PEP)
  - Enhanced Opportunity funding (EOF)
  - Technology Integration

Goals are general improvements or aims to be achieved over the longer term.

### **Required Goals for school board plans:**

1. Education is focused on what students need to learn and students achieve high standards.
2. Education in Alberta is responsive to students, parents and communities.
3. Students have access to the support services they require.
4. Teaching in Alberta consistently is of high quality.
5. Information technology is integrated into education to enhance student learning, and increase efficiency and flexibility of delivery.
7. The education system is open and accountable for the achievement of results and use of resources.

Results are measurable outcomes to be achieved.

- There is at least one designated result for each provincial goal (see pages 9-11).
- Results are to be identified for any local goals.

Performance measures indicate what data will be collected to assess achievement of results.

There is a core set of provincial measures (see pages 16-18) that must be included in school board plans and reported on in school board AERRs.

Boards must include performance measures for any local results in their plans.

### *Goals*

- improvements to work toward over the long term in order to realize an organization's vision and to fulfill its responsibilities.
- goals are developed to establish direction for the education system and change little over time.
- required goals may be restated to reflect the school board perspective; rewording of a required goal should retain its original intent.
- other goals to address local needs and circumstances, as determined by the school board and its community, may be included in the plan.

### *Results*

- results answer the question, "What will this look like when we get to where we want to be?"
- required results may be restated to reflect local needs and conditions; rewording of a required result should retain its original intent.
- boards must include at least one result for each local goal.
- for provincially required goals, boards may develop results additional to those that are required.
- each result needs a corresponding performance measures; however, one performance measure may provide data for more than one result.

### *Performance Measures*

- provide information for assessing and reporting on progress toward achieving goals and results.
- information from performance measures is used to improve education, enhance accountability and increase public understanding of how well the education system is performing.
- see Appendix 3, page 24, for more information about developing performance measures.

### *Targets*

A target is a desired level of performance which is an improvement over the current state.

School boards are required to set targets for student achievement on provincial achievement tests and diploma exams to be met by the end of the plan period.

- an important tool to help school boards focus on improving education.
- current performance is used to set the target to be achieved by the end of the next three-year plan.
- in the three-year plan for 1998/1999 to 2000/2001 and each year thereafter, boards must specify targets for improvement to be met by the end of the plan period for all provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations.
- targets are optional for all other performance measures.
- when boards set targets, they need to consider the varied circumstances which affect the performance of students in different schools.
- targets should be set in consultation with schools, parents and the community. (See Appendix 2, pages 22-23, for more information on local target setting.)

### *Strategies*

Strategies are actions to be implemented over the plan period.

School boards must include strategies:

- to achieve required provincial goals and results and any local goals and results included in their plans;
- to address the required provincial priorities for improvement (see page 6) and any local priorities for improvement; and
- to enable targeted groups of students to achieve provincial learning expectations (see page 6).

- actions designed to achieve goals and desired results.
- developed by the school board to address priorities, improvement areas, learning needs of targeted groups of students, and local issues, trends and opportunities.
- provincial strategies can be adapted to reflect the school board perspective.
- strategies do not need a corresponding performance measure.

### *Budget Information*

School board plans are to include a budget that reflects their plan.

The board's budget should be developed to support the plan. Budget information included in the plan should:

- highlight allocations to major initiatives in the plan, and
- highlight board's spending priorities.

### *Capital Projects*

- school capital priorities (modernizations, new schools, etc.), including projects planned, approved, and underway (include any innovative methods used to acquire additional space).



## Requirements

The following tables show the provincially required goals, results, and performance measures that school boards are to include in their education plans. These tables can, but do not have to, be used as a template for the goals, results, measures and strategies section of a board's three-year plan.

<b>Goal 1: Education is focused on what students need to learn and students achieve high standards.</b>	
<p><i>Results</i></p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students achieve provincial and national learning standards.</li> <li>Students acquire the education they need to prepare them for work, further studies and citizenship.</li> </ul> <p>Other:</p>	<p><i>Performance Measures</i></p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of students who achieve the acceptable standard and percentage of students who achieve the standard of excellence on provincial achievement tests (five years of results based on the number in the cohort).<sup>1</sup></li> <li>Percentage of students who achieve the acceptable standard and the percentage who achieve the standard of excellence on diploma exams (five years of results).<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Participation rate: percentage of students in grades 3, 6 and 9 who wrote provincial achievement tests and student participation in diploma courses.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>Percentage of students who receive a high school diploma or certificate, or enter post-secondary studies within six years of entering grade 9.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>Percentage of parents who are satisfied with the quality of their children's education.</li> <li>Percentage of students who are satisfied with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>their school overall;</li> <li>variety and challenge in classroom and school activities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Percentage of students in early literacy programs in ECS to grade 2 who are reading at grade level at the end of the school year (as determined by teachers).<sup>5</sup></li> <li>Percentage of students in ESL programs who are reading and writing at grade level at the end of the school year (as determined by teachers).<sup>5</sup></li> </ul> <p>Other:</p>
<p><i>Strategies</i></p> <p>School boards must include their strategies for achieving this goal and related results.</p>	

1 Student Evaluation Branch also provides achievement test results based on the number of students writing. It is optional for school boards to report this second set of results.

2 Student results based on school marks and final marks are also available for school boards to report if they wish to do so.

3 Student Evaluation Branch provides participation information to school jurisdictions for reporting in the AERR.

4 Education Information Services provides school completion information to jurisdictions for reporting in the AERR.

5 When the number of students in the program is small, a school board may find it more meaningful to report the number of students at grade level out of the total number of students in these programs. If there are fewer than five students, the number is not reported to protect the identity of individuals (see Policy 2.1.3, *Use and Reporting of Results on Provincial Assessments, Policy, Regulations and Forms Manual*, April 1997).

## **Goal 2: Education in Alberta is responsive to students, parents and communities.**

### *Results*

#### **Required:**

- Parents and students can choose schools and programs within the public education system.
- Parents, business and the community have meaningful roles in education.
- All schools are safe and caring.

Other:

### *Performance Measures*

#### **Required:**

- Percentage of parents satisfied with their opportunities for involvement in decisions affecting education in their child's school.

Other

### *Strategies*

School boards must include their strategies for achieving this goal and related results.

## **Goal 3: Students have access to the support services they require.**

### *Results*

#### **Required:**

- Services for children are coordinated at the jurisdiction and local levels.

Other:

### *Performance Measures*

#### **Required:**

- Percentage of parents of students with special needs (mild, moderate, severe) satisfied with:
  - access to services for child with special needs.
  - progress and achievement of their child with special needs.

Other:

### *Strategies*

School boards must include their strategies for achieving this goal and related results.

## **Goal 4: Teaching in Alberta consistently is of high quality.**

### *Results*

#### **Required:**

- Teachers' professional growth focuses on the knowledge, skills and attributes required to meet the diverse learning needs of all students.
- Teachers help students achieve provincial learning expectations and high standards.

Other:

### *Performance Measures*

#### **Required**

- School boards are required to identify at least one measure they will use to assess and report on these results.
- A measure from the provincial business plan can be used or adapted, or school boards may develop their own.

Other:

### *Strategies*

School boards must include their strategies for achieving this goal and related results.



**Goal 5: Information technology is integrated into education to enhance student learning, and increase efficiency and flexibility of delivery.**

*Results*

**Required:**

- Students have information technology skills needed for K-12 learning, work and post-secondary studies.
- Information technology expands choice and flexibility in what, when, where and how students learn.
- Teachers are able to integrate information technology into instruction and the management of student learning.

**Other:**

*Performance Measures*

**Required:**

- Percentage of students satisfied that they have the skills to use information technology.

**Other:**

*Strategies*

School boards must include their strategies for achieving this goal and related results.

**Goal 7: The education system is open and accountable for the achievement of results and use of resources.**

*Results*

**Required:**

- Parents and the community have timely and meaningful information about education, including student achievement and expenditures, from the school board and its schools.

**Other:**

*Performance Measures*

**Required:**

- Percentage of parents satisfied with their access to and the quality of school information about their child's progress and achievement.
- Percentage of school jurisdiction spending on instruction and administration.
- Spending per student per school year (see page 17 for instructions on calculating per student spending).

**Other:**

*Strategies*

School boards must include their strategies for achieving this goal and related results.

### SCHOOL BOARD ANNUAL EDUCATION RESULTS REPORTS

#### Required elements of AERRs

- Statement of Responsibility
- Contextual Information (new)
- Progress and Accomplishments
- Information on local and provincial performance measures (see pages 16-18 for the core set of provincial performance measures)
- Financial Summary

School Board AERRs are to be provided to the public and the department notified by **November 30** each year.

AERRs must include a Statement of Responsibility that:

- is signed by the Board Chair and Superintendent.
- states board's commitment to use results to make improvements.

Contextual information places the results in context.

The Progress and Accomplishment section highlights notable achievements in the school year just completed.

Starting with the 1999 AERR, also report on progress and achievement of targeted groups of students.

The *Annual Education Results Report* (AERR) is a brief, concise document that highlights progress, accomplishments and results achieved in the past year as a result of implementing the jurisdiction education plan. Reporting the results achieved is an important part of the accountability cycle. The results report shows where performance is strong and identifies areas needing improvement to be addressed in upcoming three-year education plans.

#### *Statement of Responsibility*

- confirms the annual education results report was prepared in accordance with legislative authority and provincial requirements.
- indicates the board's commitment to use results in planning and to take action to make improvements in areas where results do not meet expectations.
- is signed by the board chair and superintendent.
- see Appendix 4, page 25, for sample statement of responsibility for the AERR.

#### *Contextual Information (new requirement)*

- briefly explains the environment in which results were achieved.
- identifies the issues, trends, and circumstances affecting results achieved.
- explains variation between intended results and results achieved.
- does not have to be a separate section; this information can be integrated throughout the report.

#### *Progress and Accomplishments*

- briefly summarizes the implementation of the strategies in three-year plan over the past school year and other accomplishments of the board/jurisdiction, such as completion of major capital projects.
- indicates progress made in provincial and local improvement areas.
- starting with the November 1999 AERR includes progress and achievement of targeted groups of students:
  - students with special needs (mild, moderate, severe, gifted),
  - students whose first language is other than English,
  - Native students,
  - disadvantaged students,
  - other students at risk of falling behind.



### *Information on Local and Provincial Performance Measures*

Information on performance measures in the school board's education plan is reported in the AERR.

1998 AERRs (for school year 1997/1998) must report:

- achievement test results from 1995 (the year annual testing in all subjects started) to 1998 inclusive, and
- diploma exam results for five years, starting with 1994.
- achievement test and diploma exam results in relation to provincial standards and completion rate in relation to the provincial target.

Starting with the 1999 AERR on the 1998/1999 school year, boards must report:

- student results on provincial achievement tests and diploma exams in relation to provincial standards and targets set in the board's education plan for 1998/1999 to 2000/2001,
- the last five years of jurisdiction results on provincial achievement tests and diploma exams in relation to provincial standards.

Boards should note and briefly explain any deletions or substitutions of local measures in results reporting.

Report the latest available survey information each year in the AERR.

- includes a brief overall assessment of progress and achievement, e.g. results are satisfactory, exceed expectations or need improvement.
- reports progress in relation to targets for performance measures where targets have been set.
- compares local results with provincial standards for student achievement on provincial tests, diploma examinations, and with the provincial target for high school completion.
- reports 5 years' worth of jurisdiction results on achievement tests and diploma exams in relation to local targets and provincial standards. Trend data are optional for other measures.
- identifies the priority areas of improvement to be addressed in the next education plan.

Note: Boards may find that information for some local measures is too costly to gather or is not meaningful. Boards can drop or replace these measures in the next plan and indicate the disposition of these measures in their AERR. If better measures have already been developed and information on them is available, this can be included in the AERR instead.

### *Conducting Surveys*

Some designated and local measures require surveys of parents, students, staff and other community members.

To be manageable, surveys can be done on a random sampling basis or rotated among schools or stakeholder groups over a three-year period.

If boards use the same questions as are used in Alberta Education's annual surveys of a stratified random sample of parents, students and the public, local results can be considered in relation to provincial results.

While surveys do not have to be done annually, the latest available survey information should be reported in the AERR each year.

Two resources were prepared for Alberta Education in 1995 to help school jurisdictions conduct satisfaction surveys:

- *Enviroics West, Pilot Project Report*: This report compares two methods of conducting surveys of parents, teachers and students: telephone interviews and mailed, self-administered questionnaires (<http://www.edc.gov.ab.ca/educationsystem/>).

- Environics West, *Telephone and Self-Completed Satisfaction Surveys: Training Manual*: This manual provides advice on selecting samples and conducting telephone and mailed surveys (<http://www.edc.gov.ab.ca/educationsystem/>).

The questions asked in Alberta Education's 1998 survey of students, parents and the public are also available on Ednet (<http://www.edc.gov.ab.ca/educationsystem/>).

### *Financial Summary*

School boards are required to report:

- expenditure summary of the school year just completed,
- where and how detailed budget and expenditure information can be obtained.

- summarizes school board spending for the previous school year based on the Audited Financial Statement.
- concise and easily understood by parents and the public; this can be in graph or table form (e.g., the pie diagram in the provincial three-year plan for education).
- indicate where and how detailed budget and expenditure information may be obtained.



**Summary of Reporting Requirements, 1998 and 1999**

<b>November 1998 AERR</b>	<b>November 1999 AERR</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports on the <u>May 1997</u> school board three-year education plan for <u>1997/1998 to 1999/2000</u>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports on the <u>June 1998</u> school board three-year education plan for <u>1998/1999 to 2000/2001</u>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of Responsibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contextual information <u>optional</u>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contextual information <u>required</u>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress and Accomplishments                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highlights of progress made on implementing the plan and achieving provincial and local improvement areas during 1997/1998.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress and Accomplishments                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Same for 1998/1999.</li> <li>- Also progress and achievements of targeted groups of students:                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- special education (mild, moderate, severe, gifted),</li> <li>- Native students,</li> <li>- ESL students,</li> <li>- disadvantaged students,</li> <li>- other students at risk of falling behind.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results achieved for provincial and local goals.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overall assessment of progress in each goal area.</li> <li>- Reports on information on required (see next page) and local performance measures listed in the <u>May 1997</u> school board plan.</li> <li>- Reports performance in relation to any targets set.</li> <li>- Notes any changes in measures between the May, 1997 plan and information reported in November, 1998.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results achieved for provincial and local goals.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Same</li> <li>- Reports information on required (see next page) and local performance measures listed in the <u>June, 1998</u> school board plan.</li> <li>- Reports performance in relation to targets set for student achievement on provincial achievement tests, diploma exams, and for any local targets.</li> <li>- Notes any changes in measures between the June, 1998 plan and information reported in November, 1999.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Summary                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Summary of expenditures for the school year just completed based on the AFS.</li> <li>- Indicates where and how detailed budget and expenditure information may be obtained.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Summary                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Same</li> <li>- Same</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Required Performance Measures, 1998 and 1999**

<b>November 1998 AERR</b>	<b>November 1999 AERR</b>
<p>Goal 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of students who achieve the acceptable standard and percentage of students who achieve the standard of excellence on provincial achievement tests (four years of results). [Note: board decision to report results based on cohort, percent who wrote or both.]</li> <li>Percentage of students who achieve the acceptable standard and the percentage who achieve the standard of excellence on diploma exams (five years of results). [Board also may choose to report results based on the school marks or final marks.]</li> <li>Participation rates: percentage of students in grades 3, 6 or 9 who wrote provincial achievement tests and student participation in diploma courses.</li> <li>Percentage of students who receive a high school diploma or certificate, or enter post-secondary studies within six years of entering grade 9.</li> <li>Percentage of parents who are satisfied with the quality of their children's education.</li> <li>Percentage of students who are satisfied with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>their school overall;</li> <li>variety and challenge in classroom and school activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Goal 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five years of results for both achievement tests and diploma examinations.</li> <li>Report based on cohort.</li> <li>Same</li> <li>Same</li> <li>Same</li> <li>Same</li> <li>Same</li> <li>Percentage of students in early literacy programs in ECS to grade 2 who are reading at grade level (Grade 1 or 2) at the end of the school year (as determined by teachers). [Note: when the number of students in the program is small, reporting the number at grade level out of the total number in the program may be more meaningful. If the number is smaller than five, however, it is not reported to protect individual identity.]</li> <li>Percentage of students in ESL programs who are reading and writing at grade level at the end of the school year (as determined by teachers). [See note above.]</li> </ul>



<b><i>November 1998 AERR</i></b>	<b><i>November 1999 AERR</i></b>
<b>Goal 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on measures included in the May 1997 plan for this goal.</li> </ul>	<b>Goal 2:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of parents satisfied with their opportunities for involvement in decisions affecting education in their child's school.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 3:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on measures included in the May 1997 plan for this goal.</li> </ul>	<b>Goal 3:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of parents of students with special needs (mild, moderate, severe) satisfied with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- access to services for child with special needs.</li> <li>- progress and achievement of their child with special needs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Goal 4:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on measures included in the May 1997 plan for this goal.</li> </ul>	<b>Goal 4:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same for June 1998 plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 5:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of students satisfied with their opportunity to learn about technology and with their skill levels in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- spreadsheets</li> <li>- word processing</li> <li>- network communications</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ratio of student to modern(ized) classroom computers less than five years old from the date of manufacture/upgrading and variation in the student/computer ratio among schools.</li> </ul>	<b>Goal 5:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of students satisfied that they have the skills to use information technology.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 7:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of parents who are satisfied with their access to and the quality of school information about their children's progress and achievement.</li> <li>• Percentage of school jurisdiction spending on instruction and administration.</li> <li>• Spending per student per school year.</li> </ul> <p>For consistent reporting of per student spending across school jurisdictions, divide total expenditures for the year (AFS Schedule 1) by total FTE enrolment. Calculate FTE enrolment by adding September 30 actuals (BR Schedule 10) total enrolled students grades 1-12 (column 8) and FTE enrolment in ECS (column 12).</p>	<b>Goal 7:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same</li> <li>• Same</li> <li>• Same</li> </ul>

## **SCHOOL THREE-YEAR EDUCATION PLANS AND ANNUAL RESULTS REPORTS**

### **Provincial Requirements for School Plans**

School plans are to be updated annually and include:

1. Three provincial goals and relevant local strategies:
  - high learning standards and quality programs (Goal 1);
  - responsiveness to students, parents and communities (Goal 2); and
  - public accountability (Goal 7).
2. Additional goals, strategies, results and performance measures to reflect local needs and the advice of the school council.
3. Targets for achievement tests and diploma exams (see page 8 and Appendix 2, pages 22-23).

### **Provincial Requirements for School Annual Results Reports**

Schools are to report annually to the public on three performance measures:

1. Achievement test and diploma examination results and participation, reported on the same bases as in school board AERRs (see pages 9, 14 and 16).
2. Percentage of parents who are satisfied with the quality of information received from school about their children's progress and educational achievement.
3. Percentage of students who are satisfied with:
  - their school overall, and
  - variety and challenge in classroom and school activities.

The provincial requirements for school education plans and results reports were initially outlined in the *Accountability in Education: Policy Framework* released by the Minister of Education in June 1995.

School planning and reporting to the public, consistent with school board and provincial directions, ensure that the entire education system focuses on key improvements and the educational needs of students.

School planning, budgeting, assessing, and reporting are integral components of school board planning and school-based decision making. School boards will be monitored starting in 1998/1999 for implementation of school planning and reporting in their jurisdiction.

School boards are responsible for:

- developing policies and processes for school planning and reporting (including target setting) to provide for continuous improvement of results at the school level.
- determining content requirements additional to those designated for schools by the province.
- determining the formats, processes, school involvement in jurisdiction target-setting and use of school annual education plans and results reports (see Appendix 2, pages 22-23, for information on local target setting).
- establishing policies to address the frequency of school surveys and their alignment with surveys conducted by the school board.
- determining the dates for completion of school plans and reports consistent with their own planning and reporting cycle.



**APPENDICES**

***Basic Education in Alberta - the Definition*****Ministerial Order No. 004/98**

A basic education must provide students with a solid core program including language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Students will be able to meet the provincial graduation requirements and be prepared for entry into the workplace or post-secondary studies. Students will understand personal and community values and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Students will develop the capacity to pursue learning throughout their lives. Students also should have opportunities to learn languages other than English and to attain levels of proficiency and cultural awareness which will help to prepare them for participation in the global economy.

***Student Learning Outcomes***

Students are expected to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will prepare them for life after high school. A basic education will allow students to:

- Read for information, understanding and enjoyment.
- Write and speak clearly, accurately and appropriately for the context.
- Use mathematics to solve problems in business, science and daily-life situations.
- Understand the physical world, ecology and the diversity of life.
- Understand the scientific method, the nature of science and technology, and their application to daily life.
- Know the history and geography of Canada and have a general understanding of world history and geography.
- Understand Canada's political, social, and economic systems within a global context.
- Respect the cultural diversity and common values of Canada.
- Demonstrate desirable personal characteristics such as respect, responsibility, fairness, honesty, caring,

loyalty, and commitment to democratic ideals.

- Recognize the importance of personal well-being and appreciate how family and others contribute to that well-being.
- Know the basic requirements of an active, healthful lifestyle.
- Understand and appreciate literature, the arts and the creative process.
- Research an issue thoroughly and evaluate the credibility and reliability of information sources.
- Demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills in problem solving and decision making.
- Demonstrate competence in using information technologies.
- Know how to learn and work independently and as part of a team.
- Manage time and other resources needed to complete a task.
- Demonstrate initiative, leadership, flexibility, and persistence.
- Evaluate their own endeavours and continually strive to improve.
- Have the desire and realize the need for life-long learning.

***Standards for Student Learning***

The Minister of Education defines acceptable standards and standards of excellence for student achievement in consultation with Albertans. Employers are involved in specifying the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed in the workplace. Schools, school authorities and the Minister of Education assess and report regularly to the public on a range of student learning.

The school's primary responsibility is to ensure that students meet or exceed the provincial standards as reflected in the Student Learning Outcomes (outlined above), the Alberta Programs of Study, provincial achievement tests, diploma examinations and graduation requirements.



### *Education Delivery*

Schools must engage students in a variety of activities that enable them to acquire the expected learnings. Schools have authority to deploy resources and may use any instructional technique acceptable to the community as long as the standards are achieved. Schools, teachers and students are encouraged to take advantage of various delivery options including the use of technology, distance learning and the workplace.

Schools play a supportive role to families and the community in helping students develop desirable personal characteristics and the ability to make ethical decisions. Schools also help students take increasing responsibility for their learning and behaviour, develop a sense of community belonging and acquire a clearer understanding of community values and how these relate to personal values.

Students learn basic, transferable knowledge, skills and attitudes in school. Schools, in co-operation with employers, provide opportunities for students to develop and practice employability skills. The Minister of Education provides credit for off-campus learning that is approved and accepted by the school and the employer. Government works with schools, employers and post-secondary institutions to help young people make a smooth transition to work and further study.

## **Setting Local Targets for Student Achievement**

### *Targets and Planning*

A target is an implicit part of any goal. While a school's educational goals point out the directions for people's efforts, targets describe in specific terms what will be accomplished by a certain time. This allows people to assess whether they are heading where they intended to go, and how well they are moving toward their desired outcomes. Assessment of progress in relation to a target may also lead to the recognition that a different target would be more helpful in guiding your school's or jurisdiction's efforts toward a particular goal. By identifying immediate, reachable outcomes, targets encourage teachers, students, administrators, and their community to believe that distant goals are attainable.

Viewed in this way, targets can be a valuable part of your school board plan. Your mission, mandate, values and beliefs, and long-range goals all provide a context for setting specific targets. Similarly, past accomplishments are helpful indicators of what specific targets may be most appropriate. This is why achievement test and diploma exam results, as well as results of various other local assessments, are relevant in target setting.

### *Local Focus*

District targets for student achievement on the provincial achievement tests and diploma exams are a required part of a school board's education plan. These district targets provide a framework for each school in the district to use in setting local targets. However, specific target setting by each school is necessary as part of a plan of action and as a basis for assessing the effectiveness of local decisions about programs. District targets will be most helpful if they reflect the variations identified in local target setting from school to school.

Systematic interpretation of school results from provincial achievement tests and diploma exams will reveal where students need more help in order to continue learning successfully. This can be the beginning point for setting local targets for student

performance on the tests in the next year or two. While the provincial expectation, that at least 85 per cent of students will achieve the acceptable standard on each test or exam, indicates the long-term goal, staff in each school will be able to identify what percentage of their students reasonably can be expected to achieve the provincial standard in a particular test or exam in a given year. An important part of this decision is agreeing on how resources and people can support the priorities which have been set locally.

### *Tips for Setting Local Targets*

- Consider past and desired participation rates in achievement tests and diploma exams, when setting targets for student performance on specific tests or exams.
- Focus on a limited number of areas. For example, emphasize one or two subjects in which weaknesses in student performance are across grades. It may be reasonable to set "hold the line" targets in other areas temporarily.
- Set targets in relation to other targets. It is important to ensure that the achievement of one target does not jeopardize the achievement of another. For example, student participation rates for achievement tests and diploma exams should not decrease because of a desire to improve school or jurisdiction results.
- Work collaboratively across grades in a school. Students' performance on an achievement test or diploma exam reflects their learning over the years. Teachers in all grades can contribute important insights and assistance in setting targets.
- Use the school reports on achievement test or diploma exam results to identify what aspects of a subject or course need attention, and use this information to plan targets.
- Emphasize what students need, in order to succeed, rather than focusing on problems that keep students from achieving at the levels expected provincially.
- Expect to set different targets in different grades and subjects/courses, depending on past results and current priorities and resources.



- Work collaboratively at the district level, to identify areas of common strength or weakness across different schools and to determine targets for the district that can encourage all schools.
- Interpret targets to students and parents so that they are part of the school-wide effort to achieve targets.
- Report to students and parents on student achievement in relation to targets.

### *Targets in Perspective*

Provincial tests, though providing a common standard and important information about students' learning, are only one of many indicators that must be used to evaluate the effectiveness of schools. School boards and individual schools may find it helpful to set targets related to other measures of student achievement, and to areas other than student achievement. Examples include completion of programs, satisfaction reported by students or parents, collaboration of parents or others from the community, student involvement in the community, and other types of indicators reflecting local education goals.

Through its targets, each school board or school, together with parents and members of the community, can highlight priorities that exist locally for a given year and commit to achieving certain results. Insofar as target setting complements other strategies for improving student learning, your targets are likely to contribute to student learning and to the overall effectiveness of schooling in your community.

Revised, April 1998

### **Advice on School Authority Performance Measurement in Alberta**

#### **Background**

Performance measurement is a challenging and critically important aspect of implementing the Accountability Framework for continuous improvement in Alberta's education system.

School authorities are required to list in their three-year plans the performance measures they will report on in their annual education results reports. Performance measures ensure a focus on outcomes so that:

- those involved in education have information on results achieved to use to improve education,
- parents and the public have information on results achieved with the investment of resources in education.

#### **Purpose of Performance Measures**

Selecting appropriate performance measures is key to obtaining useful information and making improvements in education. School authorities develop and use performance measures to:

- assess and report annually on achievement of results to parents, the public and government;
- identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement; and
- assist in decision-making such as selecting priorities, developing improvement plans, allocating resources, setting improvement targets, and implementing initiatives and programs.

#### **Tips about Performance Measures**

Limit the number of measures for each result and focus on obtaining useful information. "It's impossible to measure everything, and as important as measuring results is, it cannot become such a large and expensive task that we lose sight of the objective." (Government of Alberta, *Measuring Up*, 1996).

- Develop a set of measures that balances student, financial, satisfaction, and other performance information.
- Differentiate between a result and a measure. A result is a specific outcome of achieving a goal. A measure helps to assess whether the result is being achieved. E.g., if the result is improved secondary student achievement in specific subjects, a possible measure might be "the percentage of junior and senior high teachers who teach in their areas of specialization."
- Select measures that provide quantitative information - e.g., "the percentage of teachers who use computers or Internet resources in the classroom" instead of "integration of computers and Internet into the classroom."
- Report performance in relation to a total number. Measures that are in the form of a ratio (percentages or rates) provide an important context for assessing performance. E.g., "the number of students who participate in school-sponsored extra-curricular activities" is more meaningful with the addition of "out of the total number of students" or stated as "the percentage of students who participate in ...."
- Identify measures that can be assessed at regular intervals to provide comparable trend data over time.
- Select measures and develop data definitions carefully so they will be appropriate over the longer term. Changing measures or data definitions interrupts trend lines.
- Develop appropriate questions for satisfaction measures to obtain useful information. Questions on the same topic often need to be worded slightly differently for each respondent group. For example, high school students might be asked, "Are you satisfied with the range of courses and programs available in your school?" and parents might be asked "Are you satisfied with the choice of courses and programs for your child?"

Examples of school board performance measures are available on Ednet (<http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca/educationsystem/measurebank97/mbank97.htm>).



### ***Sample Statements of Responsibility***

#### ***Statement of Responsibility for School Board Three-Year Plans:***

"The Education Plan for the three years commencing September 1, (year), was prepared under the direction of the (name of jurisdiction) Board in accordance with the responsibilities specified in the *School Act*, the *Government Accountability Act*, the *Policy on School Authority Education Plans* and the provincial government's accounting policies.

The priorities outlined in this Education Plan were developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Board is committed to achieving the planned results laid out in this Plan."

#### ***Statement of Responsibility for School Board Annual Education Results Reports (AERRs)***

The *Annual Education Results Report* for the (year) school year was prepared under the direction of the (name of jurisdiction) Board, in accordance with the responsibilities specified in the *School Act*, the *Government Accountability Act*, and *Policy on Annual Education Results Reports* and the provincial government's accounting policies.

The education results are used to the best of our abilities to develop three-year education plans to ensure that all students have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

## ***Glossary***

### ***Goals***

- Goals are broad statements of desired condition or aims to be attained over the long term in order to realize the vision of the school board.

### ***Issues***

- An issue is an existing or emerging condition which, if left unaddressed, could interfere with the board's ability to fulfill a mandate or achieve goals.

### ***Mission***

- A brief statement of an organization's overall purpose and role.

### ***Performance Measures***

- Performance measures provide information that can be used to describe and assess the progress of the education system in achieving its goals and results.
- This performance measure information also is sometimes called "results" or "results information" (see Results).

### ***Principles and Beliefs***

- Reflect the values of the school board and what it stands for.
- Serve to guide all decision making and assist in the development of the mission, vision, and goals.

### ***Profile***

- Provides a brief description of the school jurisdiction and the community it serves (e.g., students, programs, schools).

## ***Results***

- Results are intended outcomes of achieving the goals of the plan that address the question, "What will this look like when we get to where we want to be?"

Note: the word "results" also is used at times to refer to performance measures information (see Performance Measures).

## ***Strategies***

- Actions used in the short to medium term (one to five years) to accomplish the goals and to achieve desired results.

## ***Targets***

- A target is a desired level of performance which typically involves some increment of improvement over the current state.

Targets are an important tool to help school boards and schools focus on improving education.

## ***Trends***

- Trends are directions of data established over time that may show increases, decreases, or no change (e.g., enrolments over time, students' achievement over time).

Trend information is useful input into school board decision-making, including planning, budgeting, implementing, assessing and reporting.

## ***Vision***

- A description of the fundamental characteristics of education that the school board is committed to achieving and that are aligned with the provincial vision for education.
- Describes where the school board wants to be, what its students will have achieved, and what its services and programs for students will look like over the longer term; sometimes called a preferred future.



## List of Source Documents

- *Accountability in Education: Policy Framework* (June 1995)
  - *Policy, Regulations and Forms Manual* (April 1997)
  - *Results Report on the Three-Year Business Plan for Education: ECS to Grade 12* (1997)
  - *First things first ... our children: The Government of Alberta's Three-Year Plan for Education, 1998/1999 to 2000/2001*
  - *Pilot Project Report*, Environics West, 1995
  - *Telephone and Self-Completed Satisfaction Surveys: Training Manual*, Environics West, 1995
- Internet:  
<http://www.edc.gov.ab.ca/departement/>  
 Available from the Planning Branch, Alberta Education  
 Phone: (403) 427-8217\*  
 Fax: (403) 422-5255
- Audited Financial Statements (AFS) and Guidelines
  - Budget Report (BR) and Guidelines, 1998/1999
- Available from the School Business and Legislative Services Branch, Alberta Education  
 Phone: (403) 427-7235\*  
 Fax: (403) 427-5930
- *First things first ... our children: Agenda for Opportunity*, January 1998
- Available from the Communications Branch, Alberta Education  
 Phone: (403) 427-2285\*  
 Fax: (403) 427-0591
- *Funding Manual for School Authorities in the 1998/1999 School Year*
- Internet:  
<http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca/funding>  
 Available from the School Finance Branch, Alberta Education  
 Phone: (403) 427-2055\*  
 Fax: (403) 427-2147
- *Government Accountability Act* (Statutes of Alberta, 1995, Chapter G-5.5)
  - *School Act*, (Statutes of Alberta, 1988, Chapter S-3.1, as amended)
- Available from the Queen's Printer Bookstore:  
 Edmonton  
 Phone: (403) 427-4952\*  
 Fax: (403) 452-0668  
 Calgary  
 Phone: (403) 297-6251  
 Fax: (403) 297-8450
- Government Accountability (October 1994)
- Available from the Auditor General's Office  
 Phone: (403) 427-4222\*  
 Fax: (403) 422-9555
- *Guidelines for Interpreting and Using the Results of the Diploma Examinations*, August 1997
  - *Guidelines for Interpreting and Using the Results of the 1997 Achievement Tests*
- Internet:  
<http://www.edc.gov.ab.ca/departement/>  
 Updated annually and provided with school and jurisdiction reports; also available from the Student Evaluation Branch, Alberta Education  
 Phone: (403) 427-0010\*  
 Fax: (403) 422-4200
- Management Information Reporting Schedules
- Available from Regional Office Branch, Alberta Education  
 Phone: (403) 427-2952\*  
 Fax: (403) 422-9682
- *School Capital Manual*, May 1997
- Available from the School Facilities Branch, Alberta Education  
 Phone: (403) 427-2973\*  
 Fax: (403) 427-5816
- \* To be connected toll-free from outside Edmonton, dial 310-0000.



## Feedback Form / Comments

Please tell us what you think about the planning and reporting process and the *Guide for School Board Planning and Reporting*. Comments will be used to improve the planning and reporting process and future information provided to school boards on plans and reports.

### 1. Planning and Reporting Process

- a) What concerns do you have about the planning and reporting process?

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- b) How can the planning and reporting process be improved?

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### 2. *Guide for School Board Planning and Reporting*

- a) What did you find helpful about the Guide?

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- b) What concerns do you have about the Guide?

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- c) What changes would you suggest for the Guide?

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Please send your comments by mail, e-mail or fax to:

Planning Branch, Alberta Education

11160 Jasper Avenue

Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0L2

Fax (403) 422-5255, Phone (403) 427-8217

Internet: <http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca>

E-mail: [askEd.plan@edc.gov.ab.ca](mailto:askEd.plan@edc.gov.ab.ca)



Return Address:

Feedback Form / Comments

Please tell us what you think about the planning and reporting process and the Guide for School Board Planning and Reporting. Comments will be used to improve the planning and reporting process and future information provided to school boards on plans and reports.

Planning and Reporting Process

a) What concerns do you have about the planning and reporting process?

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b) How can the planning process be improved?

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Guide for School Board Planning and Reporting

a) What do you like/love about the Guide?

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b) What concerns do you have about the Guide?

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c) What changes would you suggest for the Guide?

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